

Christianity and Society

HISTORY, SIN, AND THE GOSPEL

by

CLIFFORD L. STANLEY

PREACHING IN OUR DAY

by

WALTER REIF

THE REAL CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT CONFLICT

by

A. ROY ECKARDT

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FELLOWSHIP MEETING

The mid-winter Fellowship meeting has been set for Monday, February 2nd. It will begin at 3:30 P. M. at Union Theological Seminary's Social Room, New York City. There will be two sessions and a Devotional Service. Professor John Bennett and Victor Reuther of the United Automobile Workers will be the speakers.

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EDITORIALS

The Partition of Palestine

The decision of the United Nations Assembly to partition Palestine and to create a Jewish and an Arab state brings several interesting and perplexing chapters of contemporary history to a conclusion. On the purely political level it represents the first real achievement of the United Nations. For the organization was able, despite the internecine strife which almost tears it asunder, to send a commission to investigate the issue, to receive its report, and after long deliberation to unite upon the proposals for partition made by a majority of the commission. This result was accomplished largely through a remarkable agreement between Russia and America, despite their conflict on every other issue. One of the valuable by-products of the solution is that it will make for a responsible attitude of our own nation toward this problem. Whatever errors the British may have made on Palestine, their impatience with us on account of our insufferable combination of criticism and irresponsibility was certainly justified. There would have been no other way of drawing America fully into a position of responsibility except by the way which was taken via the United Nations.

The partition plan should, incidentally, have been offered a year ago by the British, when everything pointed to the ripeness of time for the adoption of such a plan and when the substitute plan which was offered served merely to aggravate the reign of violence in Palestine. The British insistence that they would propose or accept no plan which was not acceptable to Arabs and Jews alike has long since been irrelevant. The

fact that no plan can be devised which will be equally acceptable to both sides points to one of those occasional tragic conflicts of interests and values for which there are no "just" solutions, or at least no solutions which will seem to be just to both disputants. The reason that this is true in the case of this particular conflict is because the "rights" which either side claim, exist in completely different frames of moral reference. The "right" of the Jews to Palestine is established partly by the urgency of the problem of their collective survival and partly by ancient claims and hopes which found their classical expression before the Jewish dispersion. The character of these claims was nicely illustrated by the fact that the United Nations commission devoted a day of testimony to the question whether the Jews had a right to Palestine on the basis of God's promises revealed in Hebraic prophecy. It may be questioned whether any truly universal religion can make such particular claims and whether the nationalism implicit in them is not transcended, not only in Christianity, but in Hebraic prophetism itself on the final heights of its vision of universal salvation. Yet it is inevitable that a people who have lost an ancient homeland should take the prophetic visions of its restoration seriously.

The right of the Arabs is quite simply (and much more simply than the Jewish right) the right of holding what one has and has had for over a thousand years. If one raises the question whether a people who are unable to exploit the treasures of their native soil have a right to continued possession, one merely points to the frailty of any theory of rights. It is certainly true that

this whole Near-Eastern world has fallen from the glory, when the same lands, which now maintain only a miserable pastoral economy, supported the great empires in which civilization arose. It is also true that the introduction of a technical and socialized Jewish community into this world may well benefit the whole Mediterranean region. It may well be, however, that such a technical civilization will become a threat to the pastoral feudalism of the Arab world. The Arab chieftains were therefore also fighting for their survival. But it is not so certain that they were really fighting for their people; for one of the sad aspects of the decayed feudalism of the Arab world is that "the people" of this world are miserable fellahin who have neither the ability nor the opportunity of putting in their claims.

Ideally the Palestinian solution opens up a new chapter in the history of the Jewish people, who, among their many marks of uniqueness, are unique in this—that they are a nation without a homeland. Since this new homeland is too small to contain them all and since even a larger one would not attract all the Jews of the world, the diaspora is not ended. Neither therefore is the peculiar religious problem of the Jews ended. That problem is created by the fact that a rigorously universalistic religion, has become under the exigencies of history, a means of defence for a particular nation. The depth of this problem is revealed by the fact that Zionist Rabbis engage in political polemics in which there does not seem to be a single universalistic overtone while the Rabbis of the "Council of Judaism" are forced into the position of seeming treason to the rightful aspirations of their own ethnic group for the sake of maintaining the universalism of their religion.

This religious issue is not resolved by the creation of a Jewish state. One may hope that this state will become a center of at least cultural security for an insecure people. It may possibly attract those who have strong impulses of ethnic survival and may free others to follow the path of assimilation. One cannot be sure. A secure cultural and spiritual center may help to preserve

rather than diminish the sense of ethnic peculiarity of the Jews in the diaspora. The position of a people who are half nation and half church and who are themselves not quite certain whether they are church or nation is difficult and will remain so. One very profound Jewish literary man is afraid that the new Jewish state will become "just another Bulgaria," by which he means that the prophetic overtones of the Jewish culture, nurtured in the diaspora, will disappear in the security of this state. On the other hand exaggerated nationalistic, as well as prophetic, overtones were encouraged in the diaspora. One can not speculate safely upon the new color which this new venture will give Jewish spirituality.

But these are problems which the Jews must solve. It is right for Christians and non-Jews to regard this whole adventure as a partial expiation for the crimes which have been committed against the Jews. It is to be hoped however that they will not expect the Arab world alone to expiate the crimes against the Jewish security. If we do not open our gates to the miserable survivors of Hitlerism, now in the DP camps, the Arabs will have a right to spit at our generosity, carried out at the expense of other people.

Americanism in Hollywood

While a congressional committee was engaged in the absurd business of trying to prove that Hollywood movies were pumping subversive propaganda into the innocent minds of our movie audiences, an organization which calls itself "Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals" published a guide to producers, which instructed them how to prevent subversive influences from creeping into the inane scripts of the movie industry.

The chief thesis of this guide is that personal virtues and vices must be rigorously distinguished from the social institutions and structures which screen characters might represent or be suspected of representing. The purpose of this rigorous distinction is to prevent any criticism from falling upon the revered institution of "free

enterprise." The guide admonishes: "If the villain in your piece happens to be rich—keep it clear in your mind and in your script that his villainy is due to his own personal character and not to his wealth or his class." The reason such a distinction is important, according to the screen guide, is because "it is the proper wish of every decent American to stand on his own feet, earn his own living and be as good at it as he can, that is get as rich as he can by proper exchange." The simple identification of the desire for vocational proficiency and the desire for wealth is an instructive revelation of the ideals of a commercial culture.

The "Guide" goes on to warn against the glorification of the "common man" which may, it thinks, have some justification in European societies. But "no self-respecting man in America thinks of himself as 'little' no matter how poor he may be. That precisely is the difference between the American workingman and the European serf." This warning is a nice expression of the absurd mood of national self-glorification in which the American business community is increasingly involved.

The "Guide" is also afraid of criticisms of our political institutions. "Don't discredit congress," it warns, "by presenting it as an ineffectual body, devoted to mere talk. If you do that you imply that representative government is no good and that we ought to have a dictator."

It is a rather sad commentary on our culture, as mirrored and slightly exaggerated in our Hollywood world, that devotion to democracy should express itself in these naive terms, while at the same time the few uneasy consciences in Hollywood should on the whole follow the party line. We do not mean to suggest that the Thomas committee has any justification; for the inanities of our movies have not been disturbed by more than an occasional breath of social criticism. It is true however that the wealthy script writers and directors and actors who feel slightly uneasy about their world, try to save their conscience by arranging parties for various "front" organizations. The communists have quite successfully milked Hol-

lywood for years. They have had little success in introducing even mild social criticism into the plots. The writers of this Screen Guide are more dangerous than any communist or fellow traveller in Hollywood. They are intent upon blowing out every possible candle of intelligence which may be still flickering in Hollywood.

Communism and Socialism in Europe

The almost hysterical indictment of European socialism by the newly created Communist Information Service reveals that the communists are much clearer than American capitalists on the character of European socialism. They know it to be the enemy of communism because of its devotion to democracy. The National Manufacturers Association on the other hand regards European socialism as the ally of communism because of a common belief in the necessity of socializing property.

European socialism was itself a little confused on this issue. In Italy the party is split between those who oppose and those who cooperate with communism. In France the socialist party began after the war with a policy of cooperating with communism, even insisting that it would go into no government except in partnership with the "other working-class party." The communists have cured the French socialists of the illusion which underlay this policy. The French socialists are now cooperating with the MRP in a heroic struggle to prevent communists from wrecking the whole French economy and producing a situation in which Gaullist reaction would take over. They have become the conscious defenders of the middle ground between communism and reaction, the explicit proponents of what Blum calls the "third force." The hysteria of communist policy in both Italy and France, which will probably reach revolutionary heights during the the winter, can only be regarded as a final desperate stand in central Europe, prompted by the conviction that if the Marshall plan should lead to the economic and spiritual revival of Europe, communism will have lost the last chance of conquering Europe. The point is

to throw as many wrenches into the machinery of European economy as possible in the hope that the resulting confusion will prevent the wheels from turning when the Marshall plan is ready to offer grist for the mills of the European economy. The possibilities of these desperate ventures are such that the results will probably remain in doubt throughout the winter. We will not know until late spring whether Europe will sink into deeper confusion or will begin to rise to convalescence.

Socialism and Christianity in Europe

A significant meeting during the past summer was held between the leaders of the Confessional Synod in Germany and the executive committee of the Socialist party. The meeting was erroneously reported in the American press as an alliance against Catholicism. Nothing could be further from the truth. Actually it represented an effort to liquidate a *Kulturkampf* in the heart of continental Europe which has had a fateful relation to the whole decay of European civilization: the conflict between Marxism and Christianity. In that conflict Marxism took the mistaken position of deriving all evils in human history from the property system and promising the redemption of man through the abolition of private property. Christianity on the other hand tended in its Catholic version to support traditional social institutions against the urgent necessities of justice in a technical age. In its Lutheran version it tended to make a sharp distinction between the redemption of man and any proximate redemption of the human community from injustice. It was in other words indifferent to the whole struggle for social justice. In Germany, at least, its indifference bordered on a support of social reaction while Catholicism established creative contacts with new social movements. (Let us be careful about our generalization in regard to Catholicism. The Catholicism of the Rhineland is something quite different from the Catholicism of Spain, or of Bavaria, for that matter.)

In this struggle Marxism and Christianity of either variety were almost equally wrong.

It was to initiate a liquidation of that conflict that the Protestant and the socialist leadership met. In the conference the Protestants confessed their error in having opposed economic and political measures, leading to the socialization of property as essentially unchristian. Many of them confessed themselves to have become socialists in recent years. But in any event they declared it to be wrong for Christianity as a religion, dealing with the ultimate issues of life, either to identify Christ with a particular program or to oppose a particular program in the name of Christ, so long as that program did not threaten the final truth about man, God, and history, as the Christian faith perceives it.

The socialists on the other hand had learned something from their conflict with communism. They admitted that a purely political religion must lead to totalitarianism inasmuch as it offered the human conscience no more final frame of reference than the political objectives of a party or a state. Its abhorrence of totalitarianism had brought it to a new appreciation of at least one aspect of the Christian truth. It had discovered that man is the kind of creature who can not find ultimate fulfillment for his life or the final judgment of his actions in any society, however important social fulfillments and social judgments may be, proximately. It was in other words a common sense about the dignity and the liberty of man which led the socialists to a reconciliation with the Christians. Whether they fully understood other aspects of Christian truth which are also important may be questioned. But that is for the future to determine.

This beginning of reconciliation is of tremendous importance for the whole of western culture. There are possibilities of similar reconciliations between French socialists and the left wing of the MRP. The French situation may be clarified further after de Gaulle has taken the right wing of the MRP and joined it with his reactionary forces.

The importance of these steps lies in the fact that both socialism and Christianity

have been seriously at fault in this tragic *Kulturkampf*. Just as the tragic decades of the past were the consequence of these mistakes so also the problems of the future can not be solved without overcoming them. It was a fateful thing for European and Christian culture that a political religion arose, promising man salvation from all his ills through a political program. It was terrible too that the socialization of property, precisely because it was a necessary step in the attainment of justice in a technical age, should have had claims made for it which belong in the realm of ultimate salvation. This made the program of socialization religiously odious and therefore alienated Christian groups which might otherwise have espoused the political program. The political and spiritual health of Britain is partly due to the fact that this ideological conflict between Christianity and Marxism never arose in this form, partly because British socialism was never purely Marxist and partly because British Christianity had a greater concern for the commonweal than continental Christianity. It is necessary to remember of course that this political religion could not have arisen if established religion had had a proper concern for the temporal welfare of man and for the just ordering of modern society.

It is to be hoped that the reconciliation begun in this interesting meeting will be carried further. Democratic Marxists in Europe are ideologically much too weak to carry the political burdens which the defense of the democratic cause against both communism and reaction has placed upon them. They are ideologically weak because they still mouth the phrases which belong to the communists and which must lead to the totalitarianism which the communists have achieved. The socialists are quite certain that they do not want this totalitarianism. But they can give no good definition of their differences from communism except their reiterated belief in the "dignity of man." Something more is at stake than this simple creed. They will have to learn for instance that the misery of man is as certain a fact as his dignity. The communists also believe in

the dignity of man in the ultimate sense. But since both socialists and communists believe that the misery of man is occasioned by the property system and since the communists are willing to destroy the dignity of man provisionally in the hope that it will be transfigured in a collectivist society, the socialists will finally have to consider not only their common ground with Christianity about the rights of the individual man but also a possible common ground about the whole human predicament of sin and the whole realm of grace.

Progress Toward Maturity

One is usually critical of one's own country. The action of nations are, at best, compounded of so much self-interest, mixed with so little concern for others, that it is never possible to have a sense of ease about national policy. Yet it may be permissible to declare a momentary moratorium on criticism and record with gratitude that this nation has moved with rapid strides toward a mature sense of responsibility since, let us say, 1918. We may remember how we insisted that war debts we treated as commercial debts after the first world war and how we came to regard our involvement in that world war as an inadvertence against which we could protect ourself in the future by passing rigorous neutrality laws.

Subsequent developments made it necessary for us, at first to evade, and then destroy these laws. We continued to move toward maturity. Long before we were catapulted into the second world war, our lease-lend arrangements with the embattled foes of Nazism achieved a new level of American statesmanship. We are now about to embark upon a vast "lease-lend" arrangement in peace time, meant to save western Europe from economic and political bankruptcy. It is perfectly true that if the Russians had not walked out of the Paris conference and if therefore some of her satellite nations had been prospective beneficiaries of the Marshall plan it would have had a much smaller chance of passing congress. This means that anti-Russian sentiment in Amer-

ica is the final force which guarantees our acceptance of this new responsibility.

But our friends in Europe would be quite wrong to assume that anti-Russian sentiment is alone responsible for our willingness to assume this burden. A recent British visitor to our shores, justly famed for her penetrating analyses of world affairs, declared that in her opinion America had "grown up" in the eight months between the projection of the "Truman doctrine" and the present program of aid to Europe. The former was a purely strategic defensive measure. The latter reveals some understanding of both the responsibilities of a wealthy nation to a poverty stricken world and the perils in which an island of affluence stands in an impoverished world. Let it be granted that the Marshall plan does not go beyond wise self-interest. It must also be remembered that the actions of no nations ever rise above that level, though there are of course indeterminate levels of charity and wisdom and there is therefore no fixed point where the concurrence between self-interest and concern for others, which determines the actions of nations, levels off.

These words of appreciation of a growing maturity are worth saying to ourselves because only a few in Europe will be wise enough or kind enough to say them. Even the democratic forces of Europe, desperately anxious for our help and darkly conscious of the fact that they belong in the same community of moral interest with us, will continue to express an almost equal abhorrence of American "materialism" and Russian "communism." They will not be wrong, of course, because Europe is seeking a middle way between the ideologies of these two giants. Yet they will be partly wrong because they will not give us credit for still being a free society and for genuine devotion to the values of civilization. They will be partly wrong, because it is much more difficult to receive than to give; and the voice of envy will insinuate itself into the counsels of even the best Europeans. The final mark of our maturity will prove itself in our ability to accept continuing responsi-

bility despite mounting ingratitude. If we become very much offended by this ingratitude it will mean that we do not understand the morally hazardous position of Dives in a world filled with Lazaruses.

But let the moratorium on criticism and the period of self-congratulation be short. Before these lines are read it may be that people of the caliber of Senator Taft will have partially wrecked the Marshall plan. It may also come to pass that we will make it odious by the sentiments which will be expressed in congress. Furthermore, no matter what congress says or leaves unsaid, it is a fact that the ideal of democratic freedom to which our nation seems so deeply devoted, is a not very Christian one. It rests upon eighteenth century physiocratic foundations. The assumption underlies it that society is like nature and that if only everyone is allowed to do what he wants, justice will be achieved automatically. We had gone much further in amending that simple creed than Europe realizes. But war-time and post-war prosperity seems to have wiped out all of our dearly bought lessons of experience. While the nation as a whole is not as uncritical in its devotion to this creed as the perusal of our journals would make it appear, we have nevertheless become more uncritical.

There is a curious pathos in this development, not only because it thrusts an ideological barrier between ourselves and democratic Europe, which we are trying to help; but also because we express this uncritical devotion to the principles of "free enterprise" at the precise moment when it has become apparent that full employment in an absolutely free economy means a continued inflationary spiral. Thus we find our business men publicly proclaiming their confidence in our "way of life" as an eternally valid one, while they privately speculate on the probability of the whole pyramid of prosperity coming down like a house of cards. The particular fears of the business community coupled with its seeming confidence is a part of a wider schizophrenia in our culture. Thus we congratulate ourselves periodically on the tremendous advances in

human "progress," but meanwhile give ourselves over to paroxysms of fear about the probabilities of atomic warfare. A special political manifestation of the same inner difficulties is the exaggerated fear of Russia in our business circles, standing in curious contradiction to our pretended confidence

in our strength and our contempt of Russian weakness.

Thus America is maturing but only within the presuppositions of a total bourgeois liberal culture which is not very mature and which has a cancer of fear and anxiety at the heart of its boastful optimism.

HISTORY, SIN, AND THE GOSPEL

By CLIFFORD L. STANLEY

Today there is no Great Order. While in the strictest sense we never had "one world," the amount of order we had yesterday now seems like a "world" when contrasted with the fragments presented to us today.

The powerlessness of countries like Britain and France is like the disappearance of a stabilizing, mediating middle class in a nation. We have left to us two great magnitudes, confronting each other starkly across a chasm, and what shall we say of them? Russia, which might have continued to embody the "generous hopes" of Marxism, has lost its sense of mission and now writhes around like a blind giant. One is reminded of the Sampson who "began to save Israel." The United States wantonly, wilfully, fatuously hasten to the right while the rest of the world is forced to the left, and thus shows a complete misconception of our tormented time at the precise instant that the sceptre of leadership is placed in its hands. What kind of world community do blindness and wilfulness between them make? Today there is no great order.

Thus there are left to us only islands of order, of varying sizes. The largest of these, certainly the largest accessible to us, is the United States. We are rich enough to maintain for the present the libertarian democracy which has marked us from the beginning. But the appearance of political police, the prevalence of witch-hunts suggest that our sands are running out. We are, it seems, in a kind of Indian Summer of our democratic phase.

There are smaller islands of order. There is the home with its sweet felicities, its loving hopes, its glad sacrifices. The home is an absorbing enterprise, with its own objectives, its schedule of triumphs and failures. There is the career of the individual, the initial vocational uncertainty, the discipline of apprenticeship, the long, rising swell to the climax, the gratifying achievement. There is the small order of the institution, such as a parish or a chapter of the Red Cross. These demand the dreams of leadership and careful application, so much so that the world may be destroyed and we cry out with Archimedes, "Do not disturb my circles!" There is also the local community with its political life.

As the great order disintegrates, the islands of order become more precious and we find our life increasingly in these latter. This is true of all men but especially of those who are able to discern the signs of the times. For however much men may differ in wisdom, they are at one in that they are men and it is the business of men to be alive and to live in their day. It is our appointment to live in this particular day and we must take what is available. We may not like to see the disappearance of great order, we may weep over the destruction of Jerusalem which we proclaim. We may fight the best rear-guard action of which we are capable. But if the event is beyond man, what are we to do? We must live with zeal and with as much satisfaction as we may in the islands of order remaining to us, for tomorrow the

"silver cord will be loosed and the golden bowl will be broken" and we will go to our "long home."

Now as we meditate about such matters as these, we begin to realize that there are two distinguishable levels to human life. There is the "great order" of which we spoke. This order is marked by such things as nations and empires and their interrelations. There is a word to describe this great order, a word well-grounded etymologically, yet withal scientifically accurate. It is the word "history." The other level in which human life arranges itself is what we called the "islands of order." These lesser orders are nature-like, in that they recur and have an appearance of constancy resembling that of nature.

The small orders never fail, or rather they do not fail as obviously and dramatically as the larger orders. There is always a town to live in, however it goes with the world. It is, for example, quite clear to us that "Rome fell." We can even give the date—476, and yet we can imagine a good merchant, let us say, of Lyons, who would have been quite astonished to hear that Rome had fallen; and what was true of him was true of countless thousands. Business went on. Town life went on. Home life went on. Careers went on. What does it mean to say that "Rome fell"? Augustine knew it and a few of his contemporaries, but the vast majority never recognized the event.

If we concentrate on the lesser orders or retreat to them carelessly when we must, we get one view of life. It is that life is dependable, it is relatively constant. Just as seed-time and harvest do not fail, neither do home life, individual careers, nor the life of towns. Empires may come and empires may go, but these things, like the river, "go on forever." And so, because we concentrate on an aspect of life where there is no death, we think that man is quite a good fellow. His structures live forever. Therefore we can put our trust in him.

If we concentrate on the larger orders we get another view. The larger orders come into existence. They were not always there. They are dated, they are almost shamefully

occasional. "Arbitrariness is the mother of history." Also they pass and "the place thereof shall know them no more." The bodies fall, the flesh rots. Now we are not so sure that man is a good fellow. He made something but he could not make it live forever. We put our trust in him and he swindled us.

Here we encounter a marvellous circumstance. The prophets of Israel concentrated on what we call great order, the nation, the empire, the relation between nations. To them goes the credit for the discovery of the category of "history." All men have history, but it remained for the prophets to isolate this level of "great order" and *to find in it the decisive element of human life.*

The essence of man is not an abstract thing like "reason" or even (much better) "freedom." It is in history or great order. The "battle for man" is the battle to tie great order and lesser order together in unbreakable unity and to make great order decisive. If great order is decisive, something happens which is not under the power of nature, something that marks man as free, as gifted with some power to create. If the lesser orders are decisive, nature is supreme, there is no true individuality, and man is simply another animal. If great order is decisive and if man is one unified being, then even the lesser orders are historical. And that is true. Spengler showed decisively that all the lesser, domestic aspects of a great order are marked with its "style." The family is not "natural" like an ant-hill. It is a structure of historic man, as we can see by comparing the Hebrew family of Jesus' day with the contemporary Roman family, and by comparing either of these with a modern American family. Furthermore, the lesser orders die as truly as the greater orders, though not as obviously. The Hebrew and Roman families of Jesus' day are gone. The tide of divorce today is very directly connected with the greater course of contemporary history.

If great and lesser order are connected and if great order is decisive, two things are clear. First, when great order goes the head and crown of history fall and the human

enterprise is centrally threatened. So serious is it, we may not view the disappearance of great order as if it were inconsequential. Second the "style" and the very existence of the lesser orders depend in the long run on the great order; and when one great order disappears everything awaits the coming of its successor. If, like the writer of *The City of God*, we find ourselves at the end of a great order, let us like him contribute our gifts and expectations to the one that is to be.

The greatest prophetic idea of all—the idea of sin—is closely connected with the prophets' concentration on great order. The lesser orders seem to live forever. There is always a family, always a career, always a town. But there is not always a great order. There is such a thing as "The Dark Ages." This collapse of the work casts discredit on the workman. There is a kind of death in man which is writ large in the death of nations and empires. St. Paul said explicitly, "Through sin death entered the world." This truth is reflected in the myth of the fall. The reason God will not let man live forever is because man knows good and evil through disobedience. The story of the Tower of Babel confirms this. Man's tower is unfinished, his tongues confused because he is proud and desperate. The idea of sin is connected with the contradicted will of a holy God and with the death of historic structures.

The death of lesser orders (and despite appearances, they do die) is less obviously connected with the character of man. When the individual man dies it is due to the "infirmities of age," hardening of the arteries, perhaps, or heart failure. Families come to an end because the members die or marry or move away. The deaths of lesser orders can in many instances be charged to nature. They are mere technical matters, without moral or religious "cause." But such comforting assurances are not available where great orders are concerned. Nature seems to have as little to do with them as it seems to have much to do with the lesser orders. The great orders are artifacts, quite obviously the work of man. And it is not old age, not

the natural processes of decay that topple them over, but greed, overreaching, cruelty, stupidity. Not nature but man wounds "history." Here again, it is history that anchors man in humanity. In this instance, what is humanized is death. Death, like life itself, is brought within the sphere of responsibility and meaning.

At first sight, the death of great order is from sin and the deaths of lesser orders are from nature or circumstance. But the truth is not quite as simple in either case. For one thing, no death where man is concerned is simply "natural." Man is a sinful being who centers existence in himself. Consequently his death not only threatens to destroy a particular sample of life but also seems to threaten the very enterprise of life itself. "We are the people and the truth shall die with us." When idolatrous man dies, it is the death of a god. Death is always viewed under the aspect of despair. "The sting of death is sin." No merely natural thing would arouse the fear and horror aroused in man by the thought of his death. "Through sin, death (as man knows it) entered the world." This is true not only of empires but of individuals of families, and of every other lesser order. "By man came death."

On the other hand, where lesser orders are concerned, the natural aspect of death is inextricably present. Hearts do fail and powers wane. The process of senescence and death in man is strictly parallel with that in animals. In this sense, it is simply not true that "through sin death entered the world." Here the Hebrew genius was led astray by its very excellence. Not only did it place nature under the power of history, in man, which is right; but it succumbed to the temptation to swallow nature up in history, which is wrong. The Greek category of "nature" is needed here. There is an aspect of death which is indeed natural, circumstantial, meaningless, an affair of molecules, cells, tissues. This is true of all death in the human world. It is true of great order as well as of lesser order. There are purely natural factors in the death of even the greatest order, like Rome or Western Civilization. There are purely fortuitous factors

as well. We may conclude by saying that death always *includes* natural factors but that it always *means* sin.

Two general conclusions emerge from our discussion. First, the idea of sin is anchored to the "historical," to the obviously man-made structures, to the structures that undeniably "have their day and cease to be." Though the idea of sin applies to the lesser orders, it cannot be held securely if we regard only them, because of their naturelike appearance and because they can with plausibility claim that nature and accident account for their disappearance.

Second, while sin and death are not the same, the two concepts are connected inextricably. On the one hand, the "sting" of death, its power to wound man, does not lie in its existence as a simple fact but in its dual meaning as the pride and despair of man and the wrath of a holy God. On the other hand, the one clue to the inner havoc and rebellion of man is to be found in the chaos and smash-up of great order. The birth of the idea of sin is not in the twisted rationalizations of evasive "conscience" but in the unarguable wreckage of "history." We discover sin only through death, and death always means sin.

With these words, the stage is fully set for the Gospel. The Gospel is a specific for sin. Sin is in the will of man, the conscious choice of a worse alternative. But sin is upon the will of man, too, and "whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." Insofar as sin is always willed, it is the fruit of freedom; insofar as man is not free to avoid it, sin is the fruit of bondage. But there is more to sin than that. Once God looks upon sin, it is eternal. Since He looks upon it with condemnation, it is eternally dark, disruptive, malignant. Consequently sin gains the power to qualify Being itself, to burden it and to befoul it. Therefore it becomes necessary to restore Being to sanity and integrity, lest life become absolutely less worth living. This is the real problem occasioned by sin, a problem beyond man altogether, a problem in the reaches of the universe.

The Gospel is the proclamation of a Deed

which overcomes sin on every level, in the will, on the will, beyond the will. We do not know what such a Deed is like. It is an "event in eternity," to borrow the title of a recent book. The cross is the revelation of that Deed. The cross translates it to categories we can understand and to magnitudes we can comprehend. The cross translates into human terms an "event" which in itself is incomprehensible.

This is the specifically Christian belief, that sin is vanquished, overcome. And so great is this belief, so vast its mass, that it equals the extent of all our other beliefs. God did all the other things that He did—Create, Guide, Judge, and Rule the world. And, as a second work, standing all by itself, He Redeemed the world from sin. This is the perennial root of Trinitarian thought, thus irreducible twofoldness of the divine activity.

The last step that remains is the application of our belief. Death is not the same as sin but the two are inextricable. On the one hand, sin is not manifested apart from death. Death is the revelation-point for sin, the "body" of sin, so to speak. On the other hand, sin is the meaning of death. Death belongs to the world of spiritual personality as well as to nature. Consequently if the belief in redemption is to be *concrete*, it must be connected with the death that evidences sin and of which sin is the meaning. In a word, redemption is a new attitude toward death.

We began with the death of great order, our problem in this article and in this day. When great order goes, the head and crown of life are taken away and life is limping and deficient. But this outcome is not only regrettable psychologically. Man is necessarily theological in character and must view this debacle idolatrously and therefore despairingly. At this point the Christian faith is able to change the meaning of the death of great order so that it is no longer the sign of man's sin but the sign of God's redemption. It is possible for gratitude to replace despair, though the dark events remain. But the Gospel has an answer for the dark facts

as well, the answer of "the Resurrection of the Body." This belief means that all order will be reconstituted and particularly, great order, the specifically "historical." Not only will it be reconstituted, but sin having been done away, it will be reconstituted without death. It is only where the "Resurrection of

the Body" has been asserted that "the Life Everlasting" can be believed.

Faith does not deny the sad facts, nor deny their sadness, but it is able to outcountenance them. And though the waters of history rage and swell, we shall not be moved.

PREACHING IN OUR DAY

By WALTER REIF

We live today in an abyss of world history, where would-be solutions themselves become problems, where heart-searching questions rather than easy answers are our diet, and where the future looms before us like a terrible no-man's land, dark and pathless.

It is a day of darkness, when both pastor and parishioner see and know the acts and deeds of God only in this darkness, when we look into this darkness for some manifestation that "the Lord, He is God," and when we are tempted to cry: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might quake at thy presence, as when the fire kindleth the brushwood, and the fire causeth the waters to boil; to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! . . . for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us by means of our iniquities." (Is. 64:1, 2, 7b.)

It is a day of frustration, despair, and unbelievable bewilderment, when the meaning of life is daily challenged by the growing meaninglessness of existence, where one struggles against fear within and without, and when the entire Church of God can unite with Jeremiah to say: "We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of healing, and behold, dismay!" (8:15.)

It is a day of judgment, when even God's mercy is experienced as judgment, for if it be mercy that we live in a country almost untouched by the ravages of war, of hunger, cold, and human misery, it has turned to judgment now, revealing once again that it

is indeed a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31.)

It is a day of enjoyment, ignorance, and idolatry, which finds us involved in the very sins which St. Paul mentioned with regard to the Children of Israel. We have abolished rationing in a world of hunger; price control in a world of inflation. We seek "new styles" in a world that is freezing, "normalcy" in a world of disorder. We, too, have sat down to eat and drink, and risen up to play. (1 Cor. 10:7b.)

It is a day of the unchurched and the ill-churched, when 74,000,000 of our fellow-citizens, 17,000,000 of them youths, live outside the Church, and countless millions within that Church which makes very little appreciative influence upon the daily lives of its people. It is a day when modern man has lost, not only the Scriptures, but also the Church. And how could he have the former without the latter? How could any word of the New Testament be meaningful to him? The focus point of the New Testament is Pentecost. And all that has been written in the New Testament, both in epistles and in gospels, has been written for what happened at Pentecost.

It is a day of a decadent Church, a Church which has lost its sense of mission to the world, which reveals daily that it has little point of contact with the life of its generation, which has failed to make the Gospel meaningful and a matter of decisive importance, and which only now is attempting to recover the evangelistic spirit of its Gospel.

It is a day of a poisoned Church, that

Church which has drunk long and deep of the waters of a culture poisoned by economic values, racialism, nationalism. It is hard for outsiders to find within it the living waters of life. Many who are outside this Church can say:

"Here is no water, but only rock
Rock and no water and the sandy road
The road winding above among the
mountains
Which are mountains of rock without
water
If there were water we should stop and
drink
Amongst the rock one cannot stop and
think
Sweat is dry and feet are in the sand
If there were only water amongst the
rock."

(T. S. Eliot, *The Wasteland*, V)

To such a day, and with such a Church, it is my belief that not only preaching, but all theological pursuits, should be directed towards the building up of the Church of Jesus Christ. What has already happened to Protestantism in New York City, is but an indication of what is happening to Christianity throughout the country. Christianity is again being reduced to a mission status! Our hope in this day is that the Church may still come to see its similarity with the situation confronting the Apostolic Church. Jesus Christ, the Crucified and Risen One, is the great Unwanted Stranger, not only in the world, but in many parts of the Church as well. In much the same manner as when He came unto His own, and they received Him not, He stands today before the modern Church of Laodicea, whose works are neither hot nor cold, and knocks for admittance. (Rev. 3:14-22.) It is not a question of the door remaining closed. But in how many cases could one put above those doors, these words of the Church's: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him"? (Rom. 10:12.) Rather one would have to say to this Church, not that it is a false Church, but a perverted one. "Ye did not so learn Christ;

if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus." (Eph. 4:20, 21.)

It is not difficult to be critical of the ignorance, stupidity, and helplessness of Church people concerning the nature of the Church and the task of Christians. And yet, these characteristics will always remain a condemnation, not upon the people so much as upon their leaders, their pastors, their theological representatives. It is of course true that some people, having ears to hear, do not hear, and having eyes to see, do not see. But it is even truer that having blind and disinterested leaders all may fall into the pit. And this latter is very much the cause of our modern Church weakness. We have all forgotten to an alarming extent that it is the Church in the form of its laity, which is the instrument especially created by Christ to perform His work and to fulfill His mission. We have forgotten that everything in the New Testament centers around not only Christ, but the Body of Christ, the Church, in which Christ is not simply its creator, but its power, living and active in the faith of the people and their pastors. All theological and religious activity, the New Testament says, exist solely for the Church. "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers;" and for this reason, "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ; till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." (Eph. 4:11-14.) And even in such a day as ours, I still believe with St. Paul, that the authority which Christ has given to all who work for him has been given for building up, and not for casting down, the Church of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 10:8.) That person is in error who believes that he could never identify himself with the present Church because of its corruption, who feels that he must work more with the people outside the Church than within, who thinks he can carry on his theological pursuits independent of the Body of Christ, who thinks he can stand aloof from the present institutional Church being simply a critic

or judge, rather than being within the Church as a co-worker with God. A renunciation of the Church is also a renunciation of God and Christ. A generation which renounces the Church paves the way for that generation which knows neither God nor Christ, for after all, this is the task of the Church, to make known God and Christ, and no other institution in the world will take over as substitute.

It is therefore my opinion that if we are to have some sort of revival amid Protestantism in this day, it can only come when all theological pursuits are once again directed towards the perfecting of the saints, unto the building up of the Body of Christ. And if such a revival does materialize it will show itself in that area defined and limited by the relation of the pastor to his parish, the countless thousands of parishes and charges scattered over a vast amount of territory. The spark may be lit in other places, but if it does burst into flames, it will do so only when Church people have appropriated the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and when there has been created in the hearts of the people a response of faith through the power of the Word of God as preached. Ecumenical conferences, inter-meetings of all sorts at best can serve only as a guide to a faith already present. They can never create faith. And so they remain lifeless and meaningless unless the Church, defined as congregations of believers, has the faith by which it may appropriate them.

With the above in mind I want to put forward two principles which I believe must be strengthened if preaching and the Church are to be somewhat adequate for our day. The first is what I consider to be the distinctive task of the minister as a preacher, and the second is the relation of this distinctive task of the preacher to the life and welfare of the Church, to the building up of the Body of Christ, and to the world in general.

I can begin by stating that the first duty of the preacher is always to his Church, his congregation, his parish, and not to the greater world. I say this because I believe this to be the relationship which existed in the early Church between the apostles and

the congregations, and also because—and this is more important—the New Testament understanding of the Church makes it very clear that it is the Church, this new creation of the Lord's, which has been called and created to be the great servant of God to the world, and not individual apostles, prophets, preachers, or theologians. In other words, no preacher should consider himself a prophet sent by God to the world, a herald of tidings unknown, a reformer, a world-builder, a voice of the Church to the world, until he is first of all the voice of the Church to the Church. He preaches first of all to his congregation, to their needs, their weaknesses, their failings, their faith. His pulpit is in his Church, and must serve as such. It is not equipped with an outside speaker, so that the world in general may hear him. His sermons are addressed to people, most of whom live and move in ordinary walks of life, whose pursuits are commonplace, and not to delegates who control a deciding vote in the U. N., nor to governmental powers who can make or break a nation. He does not have as his listeners a world court before whom he can give his solutions for our many problems. He may imagine he has such an audience (this is a peculiar sin of all of us preachers), but when he gets his head out of his cloud he will discover that he has addressed his sermon to people hundreds and thousands of miles away, and that his true listeners have gone home without having the Gospel effectively integrated into their lives. He may have impressed his people with his knowledge, and with the fact that he knows everything about everything, but whether he has made meaningful the truths of Biblical thought, whether he has made meaningful the Presence and demand of God on the level of the faith of his congregation, yes, whether he has made their faith stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Cor. 2:5), is indeed another matter.

We have been speaking here of the limit-
edness of the preacher, wherein lies his distinctive task, which is so to preach the Word of God to his congregation that they might be built up as a Christian community. He

is limited also within his limits. He brings to the Church nothing which is not already there, except his own personal faith, for if the Word of God is not there, nor the sacraments to nourish and support faith, he is not in a Church, but at best a religious club or society. What he has to give to his Church is the Word which is always within it. In this sense the preacher's sermons to his congregation are really the Church preaching to the Church. For if he preaches from Scripture he is bringing to bear the weight of the New Testament picture of the Church upon his own congregation, the Perfect Church upon a very imperfect Body of Christ, the Universal Church upon the local manifestation, the past Church upon the present, the Greater Parish upon the local parish, the life of the Kingdom of God upon the life of the Communion of Saints. And he preaches the Church to the Church for the one specific purpose of building up and strengthening the faith which is in the community of believers, so as to bring them to that point where they are ready to work as a Christian community in the world.

The fruit of preaching, then, is found when a preacher so preaches to his congregation that he also can be seen preaching from them. It is his distinctive task, not merely to entertain, enlighten, inform or educate, but to empower. He must give leadership to his people, but he acts as the head of his congregation, the shepherd of his flock, and not simply in its place. He can involve himself in all sorts of community projects, political programs, and world schemes. He can have his name on the letterhead of countless numbers of organizations, but he acts in weakness if it is not together, he and his Church, that they face the world. When the preacher turns to his Church, it is for the purpose of bringing it under the power of the True Church. When he turns to the world, it should be to attempt to win it into the Church. He is a shepherd to the first, an evangelist to the second. But his primary concern is to make his congregation a Church of the living God, a Church wherein may be found the response of faith, a

Church which acts upon the world because it is first of all aware that it has been acted upon by God. A denomination which acts only through its pastors, its boards, its seminaries, is a weakened, harmless Church, as weak and harmless as Spellman's proclamation forbidding a majority of New York City to see *Forever Amber*.

This brings us to the second consideration, that of the relation of this distinctive task of the preacher to the life and welfare of the Body of Christ. What needs to be preached if we are to bring about such Christian witness, so that it is truly the Church which does it?

Regardless of the present weakness of the Church and the ignorance of its people as to her true nature, it is not the task of Protestantism to imitate Catholicism and to exalt only the Church. True it is that preaching presupposes a Church and not merely a religious audience. But as the preacher himself stands beneath the Word of God, so also it is the task of his preaching to bring his congregation beneath this same Word, that together the Gospel may be exalted in order that the Church may know that if she has a place anywhere, it is beneath this Gospel and this Word. It is always the Gospel that is to be preached, wherein is proclaimed the sovereignty and Lordship of Christ, wherein is made known that unique authority which God has invested in Jesus Christ, which "made him to sit at the right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come"; and which "put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:20-23.) The Lordship of Christ is to be so proclaimed that all people may be made aware that "he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:15), to make them conscious of the fact that "ye are Christ's and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:23), and that

we have been called into the fellowship of His son Jesus Christ because we are God's husbandry, God's building.

And when the Lordship of Jesus Christ is truly preached, and His Name truly exalted, the exaltation of the true nature of the Church must necessarily follow. The Church must be something, and only something, by the very nature of the Lordship of Christ. It cannot be otherwise. As there is but one Lord, before whom all must bow and every tongue confess, so also there can be but one Church. Christ cannot be divided, and neither can His Body. The preaching of the Word must always be directed towards making the Church that place which its Lord already is, "where there cannot be Greek or Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all." (Col. 3:11.) And the preacher must bear witness to his congregation not only by the Word which he preaches, but also by the sacraments which he uses to support his preaching, that there is but one Lord and one Church. He must make known to his people the seriousness of the truth contained in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, that "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10:16, 17), and in the Sacrament of Baptism, that "in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free." (1 Cor. 12:13.) It is in this manner, through the proclamation of the Lordship of Christ, and the use of the sacraments supported by the Word, that the preacher must build up his congregation into a Christian community in the Lord.

I have been struck by the fact that the problems which I meet in my parish are really the same problems which the Apostle Paul met in his, and that he dealt with these problems over and over again by reasserting the Lordship of Christ, by interpreting again the meaning of the sacraments, and by dwelling at length on the true nature of

the Church, and by continually exhorting that all should be built up into the Body of Christ. I believe that this also is the foundation which all preachers must strive to build in the life of their congregation, so that out of this might flow the good works of faith. If the preacher preaches to specific problems, he must do so from out of this foundation. He preaches concerning the race problem because there is but one God and Father of us all; he directs the eyes of his congregation towards the evils of economic exploitation because he would have his people know that it is the teaching of the Church that when one member suffers all suffer; he brings into his Church and before the eyes of his people the sufferings and despair of the world because the Church is supposed to be that place where we remember those that are in bonds as bound with them, and those that are ill-treated as though we ourselves were liable to the same treatment. (Heb. 13:3.) He preaches in this manner in the hopes that this Word might find soil, might spring up, and bring forth fruit.

The local manifestation of the Perfect Church will always remain an imperfect Body of Christ. There will always exist in the parish an ethical tension between the Church of the world, and the Kingdom of God. And God's Word will always come to the House of God first in the form of judgment, for it is a living and active Word, exposing us all as naked before Him with whom we have to do. But where the hearts of people have been turned to God in faith and understanding, and when the eyes of our hearts have been enlightened by this Wisdom which is the Dayspring from on High, the Word comes not only as judgment, but also as Grace, which in our day will be truly saving Grace. A Church which again knows her Lord to be the One Lord, which is serious in its comprehension that God's love is not only love for "Israel" but is wider and includes men of every nation, race, and tongue, such a Church will do much to remove the offense which she herself has placed in the way of many people in this generation. Then will the Church be a Church, not of wood or stone, but the com-

pany of believing people, who surely must have Christ in their midst, who are the sons of God because they are led by the Spirit of God, a Church whose dry bones shall be made alive again because she knows that Jahweh is the Lord. Then will She again have the living waters of life, so that people may stoop down, and drink and live. She will attract and win the lost, who in many cases are the best. She will repel and judge evil. She will truly be a Shepherd for Israel in this day of the whirlwind. She will strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind up

the wounded, bring back the strayed, seek out the lost. (Ezekiel 34:1f.) She will again be a living Church, for "the Church of Christ has lived, and will continue to live, as long as Christ shall reign at the right hand of the Father, by whose hand she is sustained, by whose protection she is defended, and by whose power she is preserved in safety." (Calvin.) And She will live with this assurance, that all other things may fall, but God's Word remaineth, and that Hell itself cannot prevail against that Church for which Christ, in His great love, died. (Eph. 5:25.)

THE FALL CONFERENCE¹

The Fellowship met in its fall conference in New York City on October 30-31, for a program arranged by John Dillenberger and members of the executive committee. The discussions of American and world events came to a conclusion with an address on "Problems of the United Nations," by Dr. C. L. Patijn, Dutch delegate to the General Assembly. Although Dr. Patijn's remarks were off-the-record, it may be stated that members of the Fellowship found unusual illumination on UN problems from the perspective of a delegate from one of the smaller nations, not directly involved in the noisier struggles of the great powers.

Several members of the Fellowship contributed to a symposium on "Preaching in Our Day." This symposium is represented by the article by the Rev. Walter Reif in this journal. Brief reports of the other meetings follow.

Mr. Lawrence Rogin, Educational Director of the CIO Textile Workers Union spoke on "Problems and Prospects for Labor." Mr. Rogin suggested four areas of labor involvement which make it necessary for labor to reformulate its thinking about political responsibilities.

(1) The problem of general economic

stability. The problem of maintaining full employment and preventing inflation is of primary importance to unions. Labor is not benefiting by the inflationary price situation, and only overall planning will bring the kind of stability which would remove labor's fears for the future.

(2) American foreign policy. The labor movement has a real stake in the conduct of our foreign affairs. Labor must recognize the real burden of exports on the economy today and understand the advantage of an overall policy of foreign investment. Labor also has a stake in a foreign policy which will implement the building of democratic governments abroad.

(3) The problem of American political parties. Both of the above problems show that there must be greater participation by labor in political decisions. The effort to establish a third party next year will fail because labor realizes that it will require all its efforts to defeat the Republicans. Labor must use its vote as a lever in liberalizing the Democratic party.

(4) The problem of organizing the unorganized. Actually the majority of industrial workers remain unorganized. The recent attempts to reach unorganized areas have been disappointing. The resistance of employers is greater than ever before and the fear of the employes is likewise consider-

¹ This report has been compiled by members of the editorial board, with the help of John Dillenberger, Paul Abrecht, and William Hamilton.

able. They feel insecure regarding housing, etc., in mill towns. But labor must organize if it is to survive.

The discussion period developed into a frank and spirited debate of several issues, principally the problems of particular union practices and the lack of ethical standards in economic life.

Dr. Karl Polanyi, author of *The Great Transformation*, and now visiting professor of economics at Columbia University, spoke on "New Frontiers in Economic Thinking." Dr. Polanyi's life-work has been, as Dr. Heilmann pointed out in his introduction, the definition of the place of economic life in the whole of life.

Dealing with the problem of human freedom, Dr. Polanyi pointed out the crippling effect of our market economy today. Capitalism's grip on our society has been partially neutralized on the *institutional* level by such specific protective measures as tariffs, trade unions, and factory laws. But on the *human* level no such defense has been available. Thus man, his mind, and his estimate of his mind have felt the impact of a market economy on three levels: the effect on man himself, on his society, and on the nature of institutional freedom. As children of a capitalist culture we have created the abstract institutional man who can be simply explained, we suspect, by his social and economic relationships. But these relationships in no sense exhaust man. Economic man is simply not real man.

A discussion of freedom—what we have in our market economy and what modifications and advances are possible under socialism—formed the final part of Dr. Polanyi's discussion. At this point is the really "new frontier," for the problem of institutional freedom has not been adequately thought out. Dr. Niebuhr and Dr. Heilmann contributed to the concluding discussion of the problems of preserving essential and desirable freedoms, while checking harmful freedoms in a more socialized political and economic life.

The Rev. Vernon Holloway, of the Congregational Council for Social Action, led the discussion of "Christianity and Social

Strategies." Mr. Holloway found the problem of Christian social ethics in the command to "Be in the world and yet not of it." Man as a participant in the realms of historical processes and of faith must constantly avoid the temptation to concentrate wholly on historical improvement or to become preoccupied with simply the religious. The Christian gospel is that no courses of action fully comply with the gospel. The Christian lives in eternal tension between the commands and possibilities to obey the word of God.

The temptation for individual Christians (and churches too) is to identify *particular* solutions to social problems as final. In economic and racial areas there is a tendency for the church to indulge in panaceas. There is little recognition that the distinctive doctrine of the church does not throw too much light on specific social issues. But it would be wrong to conclude also that because there are only imperfect outlets for social action that social action should not be carried on.

Mr. Holloway illustrated his principle by reference to numerous actions—some creative, some perhaps harmful, and some ludicrous—of Christian groups. There was a full discussion of particular social issues now confronting the church.

The address by Dr. Paul Lehmann of Princeton Theological Seminary, was entitled, "Theology in a World of Power." Stating that both theology and power have always been factors in the world, he directed his remarks both to the rediscovery of theological integrity and to the accentuation of power in our world, together with the meaning of the former for the latter. Analyzing the world of power, he elaborated upon the increasing connection of power with technology and economic factors. The technological character of power is particularly threatening in conjunction with the secularization of our culture and the virus of dehumanization. At a time when power is extended in scope, there is no sovereignty under which it is exercised. The result is that power becomes an end in itself and is exercised for the sake of power.

In Christianity, Dr. Lehmann maintained

that sovereignty is expressed in the trinitarian doctrine of God in which there is a framework of order, authority, and human meaning in such a way that all unitarianisms are excluded. Today, this is re-emphasized in the theology of Karl Barth, where the Trinity is the beginning of theology. The significant thing is that the trinitarian doctrine gives us a possible theology of power, for it places God as Sovereign over the use of power. Charles N. Cochrane has shown that Christianity made exactly this

solution effective in the period of the breakdown of classical culture.

For our day, it must again be the function of theology to clarify and order power, particularly political power. The Church must provide a sense of direction and bring people in responsible relation to that direction. It could just be that the recovery of Christian understanding within sections of the Church and the quite unexpected, however limited, understanding outside the Church, may lead to a theonomous use of power in a world where power has lost its moorings.

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THE REAL CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT CONFLICT

By A. ROY ECKARDT

Today's strife between the two great branches of American Christendom represents a cleavage far more profound and tragic than a mere quarrel over differing interpretations of tolerance or religious liberty or the problem of church and state. The fundamental struggle is between two irreconcilable theologies. It goes back to Pilate's query, "What is truth?" Without trying to answer his question we may say that Protestantism—or, more modestly, a Protestant view—denies the implicit claim of the Catholic Church that truth is something men can possess. Since we are not gods, truth must always possess *us*. Expressed in different terms, Catholicism commits the fatal error of imagining that a *historical* institution can present an unequivocal embodiment of trans-historical reality. Catholicism, in effect, refuses to admit that the Christian church must always stand under the judgment of God. The result of this refusal is an attempt to equate the church with perfection and the contention that when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* we are listening to the voice of Christ.

Catholic social ethics is simply the logical manifestation of initial theological principles. If the church is *the* representative of Christ, to deny it a privileged place in society is to be guilty of denying Christ. But Protestantism, going back to Luther, has a criterion for condemning the Catholic position and exposing as unwarranted the Roman interpretation of the rôle of the church in the community and in the world. To Luther, the Pope is the anti-Christ. Name-calling is an odious business and the devil himself is very good at it. But is there not a truth in what Luther says?

Whenever a figure of history, involved as he really is in all the sinfulness and ambiguities of historical life, claims an

unambiguous representation of ultimate perfection and truth, that personage is disclosing himself as the enemy of Christ. Claims to perfection are always idolatrous and idolatry is the worst possible sin against God. In prosaic terms the scandal of contemporary Catholicism is the unwillingness of the hierarchy to admit, "We may be wrong."

This is not a plea for the type of liberalism which affirms the equality of all "high" religions. Instead I am speaking on behalf of the kind of Christianity which in its confession that Christ is the unique Son of God, the One chosen as the divine Judge of the world, will be ready to take the next step and say, Surely if Christ is our *only* Lord it follows that to equate the designs and truths of Methodism or Presbyterianism or Roman Catholicism with the truth and sovereignty of Christ is to be guilty of idolatry. It is the worship of Baal, not the worship of Christ. No historical institution can by taking thought reach the heights of trans-historical perfection. The very attempt to do so only serves to indicate that the claimant is far, very far, from the Kingdom of God. We need not go to the opposite extreme and refuse to make any moral or religious judgments at all; what we can do is to affirm the truth that no man or group of men can possess the Truth. We need humility, not a complete relativism.

Because of the fundamental divergence between the Roman Catholic theological position and that of Protestantism it may well be that the present conflict in America is insoluble. It would appear that the admission, "We may be wrong," is a prerequisite not only to democracy but to Christian brotherhood. If such an admission is necessary it becomes obvious where the burden of future action lies. It lies

with the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestant denominations—or most of them—are confessing through their participation in the ecumenical movement that no one of them possesses the Truth.

This does not mean that we should take a holier-than-thou attitude toward Roman Catholics. Just the opposite. The danger in protesting against Catholicism lies precisely at the point where the Protestant's admission of his own and his church's imperfection affords the opportunity for a new Pharisaism. We admit that we are wrong! Look how much better we are than you!

Will Roman Catholicism ever give up its claim? Or for that matter will Protestantism ever deny its claim that no one interpretation of Christian faith embodies *the* truth? The answer to both these questions is, probably not. Protestantism looks upon the ecumenical movement as one of its highest achievements and the ecumenical movement is simply a negation of the Roman Catholic principle. And as for the charge that the Catholic Church is in its inmost essence guilty of the sin of idolatry through equating the church with perfection, such a charge is meaningless to the Catholic. After all Christ has chosen the Roman Catholic Church as the perfect and unique (*einmalig*) vehicle for His grace. The answer to the Protestant accusation is, as one Catholic once put it, "Christ said the opposite." This poses a neat problem for the Protestant apologist. Does he have to throw up his hands at this point and become "confessional"?

In any case, "until" either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism does surrender its theological claim we are largely wasting our time trying to resolve the Catholic-Protestant conflict. Someone may say, Well, after all, in our country the two faiths have existed side by side for a number of years now without any really tragic clashes. But no one can deny that tension is growing tremendously. It is not the mere apostle of doom who will admit that open warfare may not be far off. This is said not only on the basis of the increas-

ing assertion of Catholic claims to social power but also because Protestant reaction, while justified in principle, is taking a considerably belligerent turn—as witness the policy of *The Christian Century*.

There are at least three methods which may be suggested as the way out of the Catholic-Protestant conflict: tolerance, the employment of power, and a theological reconciliation. The first engages in affirmations of love and respect. It sets up brotherhood programs. The National Conference of Christians and Jews comes in here. The difficulty is that where one of the parties involved (the Catholic Church) is officially opposed to tolerance we find that brotherhood programs actually redound to the benefit of that group at the expense of the other or others. How is it possible to be tolerant toward intolerance? Wherever Catholicism is in control (Italy, Spain, Argentina, Eire) minority faiths are in for a hard time.

Sometimes the adherents of this goodwill approach contend that after all the real foe of Christianity right now is secularism and that if the branches of the church do not hang together against this enemy they will surely hang separately. Occasionally the conviction is also expressed that humanity is in such imminent danger of blowing itself to smithereens that we must not concern ourselves with piddling interfaith conflicts. These objections simply confuse the issue. Ecclesiasticism, whether Catholic or Protestant, and secularism are simply manifestations of the same evil: self-deification. If secularism has as its false ultimates man and science, Catholicism has the church and the papacy. The issue of our day is not Christianity versus secularism so much as it is Christ versus idolatry in all its forms. The One men need—and without whom they must ultimately exterminate themselves—is a God who destroys the worship of all human idolatries. The only means by which our annihilation will finally be prevented is through the common conviction that all mankind is judged and found wanting by God and hence that will-to-

power over our fellows is but a pitiful and ultimately abortive attempt to usurp the throne of the Most High.

A second solution is of the dog-eat-dog variety. It is not so much a method as a counsel of despair. Since the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism is fundamentally ideological and theological in character, and since neither party will budge in the matter, what we should do—or are forced to do—is to use political power and perhaps even physical force to push the other fellow out of the picture or at least prevent him from doing that to us. Is this the only approach left for Protestants? I am not advising it. But sometimes I am ready to confess despair. From time to time Catholicism has employed this second method. Has it done so with greater realism than we Protestants have, however fallacious its theology? It is a shame even to admit for a moment that Machiavelli and Nietzsche may have to be our teachers rather than the Prince of Peace. But if the first way out is barred and if the third solution is incapable of realization, is there really any alternative?

What about this third solution? From what has been said, its application appears most doubtful. It is very idealistic. It involves the willingness to confess that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. Both branches of Christendom must be ready to affirm in mutual contrition, "We are sinful and fallible men, standing every moment of our lives under the sovereign judgment of Christ."

Protestantism is certainly called upon to look to its own spiritual state and to try its level best to avoid idolatry. The spirit of Anti-Christ is still very much in evidence within both branches of the Christian church and let us not in this hour of decision ally ourselves with him through the worship of ourselves or of our own interpretation of Christianity. If we refuse to obey him, and do so humbly, we will at least be striving to fulfill our side of the bargain. The question remains for our Christian brothers in the Roman Catholic Church, "What are *you* going to do?"

The prerequisite for positive Christian ethical action, especially in inter-group conflicts, is still the readiness to pray, "Lord, be merciful unto us, miserable sinners." Will the day ever come when Protestantism and Catholicism will truly accept Christ as Lord instead of expending their energies in worshipping institution, denomination and creed? Think of the electrifying result of a papal announcement that the Church at Rome is ready to join the World Council of Churches! A new light would shine amidst the tragedies of a divided and distraught world. Yet there is much to be done within Protestantism too. Baal is by no means an unwelcome figure among us.

But I must be careful not to confuse ideals with stern realities. The hope that the branches of the Christian Church will ever give their sole allegiance to Christ is perhaps a mere flight of the religious fancy.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM ITALY

The annual synod of the Waldensian Church took place this year at Torre Pellice from September 1st to September 5th. I had the privilege to attend it. On the whole it was conducted in very much the same manner as an annual conference of our Methodist or Presbyterian denominations; but there were a few very striking aspects of this conference about which I should like to inform our readers.

First of all I must say a word about the political background of this synod. Torre Pellice is the center of the three Alpine valleys where the Waldensian people resisted over a period of many centuries the pressures from the surrounding Roman Catholics. During the second World War the fighting tradition of these mountaineers manifested itself again in intense partisan warfare against the Nazi-Fascist occupation. All along the highway I saw a good many stone tablets which marked the place where resistance fighters were hanged or shot.

The main issue of the synod, which reappeared from time to time in a number of different aspects, was the position of the Church with respect to the new Italian government. The Constitutional Assembly not only has renewed Mussolini's treaty with the Vatican, but has written it directly into the constitution of the Republic. This puts all religious minorities directly at the mercy of the government.

I wish to quote from the manifesto of "Evangelical Christians of Italy" published in the Waldensian periodical *La Luce* of May 30, 1946, while the Lateran Treaty was being debated. "For the sake of the very dignity of our Country we, the Evangelical Christians of Italy wish to lay before the People and the Constitutional Assembly the problem of religious liberty in all its seriousness. The shameful disparity of the citizens in front of the law must cease: so that the needs of each faith may manifest themselves without any interference by the State. Italians: as there cannot be true human free-

dom, social or political, except insofar as it rests on a religious freedom equal for all, we must eliminate every residue of the old confessional State." The manifesto went on to affirm the following principles:

1. Full and complete freedom of conscience and religion.
2. Absolute independence of all churches from the State.
3. Religious neutrality on the part of the State, which is to refrain from any form of religious interference.

Unfortunately the objectives were not reached, as the two most powerful political parties, the Communists and the Christian-Democrats, supported the Lateran Treaty.

Another striking point of the synod consisted in the intense evangelical fervor which has manifested itself since the end of the war, especially in Southern Italy. The scarcity of trained ministers and of financial means makes it impossible to take full advantage of this exceptionally favorable moment for the preaching of the Gospel.

In the light of what I have already said about the difficulties of the present political moment, and about possibilities of a new attempt at evangelization, it is easy to see how the Italian Protestants are feeling the need to unite in closer cooperation. The plan of fusion between the Waldensian Church and the Methodist Church is slowly progressing; it is deeply desired by the memberships of both Churches; but it has encountered difficulties of various kinds since it was first projected in 1942. Now the whole problem seems to hinge about the confession of faith of 1655, which the Methodists do not feel they can accept, without qualifications, and about the name "Waldensian" which the members of the present "Evangelical Waldensian Church" wish to keep for its historical significance.

At the same time much was said at the synod about a plan to develop the existing

Federal Council of Evangelical Churches into a real Federation, with power to make decisions binding on the member-denominations.

I shall refrain from commenting further on the debates, the motions, the statements of principles, in which I participated during those four days at Torre Pellice; but I should like to stress the overall impression that I have carried with me: I have felt very keenly that Italian Protestantism, as represented by the Waldensian and other de-

nominations, is an important historical force. Its importance is due not to the size of its membership, and perhaps not even to the skill and intelligence of its leaders—although there are many outstanding ministers and laymen—but is due to the grim sense of loyalty with which these people have been defending the same Evangelical faith from the same Catholic priesthood for more than seven hundred years.

PAUL A. CASTELFRANCO

"WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH"

Lo, world, the prophet's word when now in tears
We're blinded by a revelation pure
Of cosmic wrath which damns our knowledge sure
That God and we in spirit are compeers.
With loveless faith, self-righteous works, and jeers
Of wise, embittered men, whose truths can't cure
What unbelief has caused: man will mature
In doom, parched and lost on a sea of fears.
O America! Be that nation great
In love of justice, virtue, freedom, God.
There is the patriotic task we must
Resolve, that will dismay the hearts who hate
This vision worshipped by free men whose rod
Is the Word they and their generations trust.

Written September, 1940

R. A. LANDOR

BOOK REVIEWS

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. By Henry Bamford Parkes. New York: Alfred Knopf. \$3.50.

No better interpretation of the development of American culture in brief compass has been written than this succinct but profound work by Dr. Parkes. The British ancestry and long American experience of the author make it possible for him to view the American scene from a partially external and partially internal viewpoint. The work is particularly valuable because it isolates and identifies those strains of American culture which are uniquely American and those which belong to the general European tradition. It would be better to say that Parkes is anxious to show how European political, moral, and religious traditions are modified when they are transplanted to a new continent, where a frontier makes the European class system fluid, where a new nation is forced to achieve order and unity upon a new constitutional basis, and where the growth of commercialism and industrialism impinges in a new way upon the older agrarianism.

Parkes' chapter on religion is a masterpiece. Nothing written by secular historians has penetrated so deeply into the meaning of New England Calvinism or has succeeded so well in avoiding the air of slightly contemptuous patronage or patronizing contempt with which a secular age seeks to understand the religion of its forebears. Parkes even understands the subtle and yet profound difference between Jonathan Edwards' highly metaphysical Calvinism and the original variety. His only error is a tendency to identify generally held Christian doctrines of sin and grace with Calvinism or even with "European religion." It is a pity that he does not trace the descent from Puritanism to Yankeeism and from Evangelical Christianity to the sentimentalities of a later day. He is content merely to record the conviction that "after the Civil war Protestantism tended to become in a

large measure, merely the reflection of American life rather than a positive and independent force working for the transformation of human nature." This judgment is on the whole correct. It would have been interesting to have a historian with 'Mr. Parkes' capacity for dealing with the profounder meanings of a cultural history to trace the story of that descent and explain how the salt came to lose its savour.

R. N.

CHRISTIANITY AND PROPERTY. Ed. by Joseph F. Fletcher. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947. \$2.50.

This book on the Christian understanding of property is certainly a valuable contribution to the literature on the subject of the ethics of property. A comparison of these essays with those in the earlier work edited by Bishop Gore (*Property: Its Rights and Duties*) would lead to the conclusion that this new work has produced some distinctly new interpretations and statements which are superior to their counterparts in the Gore study. Here I would refer specifically to the chapters on the development and treatment of the idea of property in the history of Christian thought.

Professor Lehmann's essay on the attitude of the Reformers toward property, reprinted in the previous issue of *Christianity and Society*, is brilliant though there seems to be a hiatus in the argument by which he attempts to prove that "justification by faith defines the presuppositions and the conditions in terms of which goods may be said to be rightly disposed." Readers of this journal have had an opportunity to evaluate this essay for themselves.

The chapters on the "Significance of Capitalism" by Charles D. Kean, one of the members of our Fellowship, and "A Theological Perspective" by Professor Joseph Fletcher, include some good analyses of the evolution of property under capitalism, though both articles contain some very misleading generalizations about purely eco-

economic questions. Both might have expanded on the idea of the contradictions within capitalism as a system of property and as a dynamic force constantly creating new forms of social control. Modern monopoly capitalism is the chief violator of its own ethics, either of property or of enterprise. As Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. has recently pointed out, "The rise of big business, the development of mass production and mass organization, have slowly taken the guts out of the idea of property." (See *Partisan Review*, May-June 1947). But because of this, he concludes that the peaceful transition to a democratic socialism may be much more difficult!

In some respects, this new book is much less comprehensive than the earlier work edited by Gore and does not exactly replace it for students of the problem of property. There is for instance nothing in the present work which is comparable to Hobhouse's discussion of the "Evolution of Property," which was the opening essay in the Gore study. However many of his ideas have been incorporated in the present book, particularly the distinction between property for use and property for power. This new work also lacks an essay which defines the principle of property today as A. D. Lindsay's article did for the previous symposium. There is no clear consensus in the present work about the use of the term property and sometimes within the same chapter the concept is used with different meanings. If, in defining the problem of property as a theological problem, some special definition of property (in contrast to the one used in law and economics) is used, this ought to be made absolutely clear and the difference stated. Moreover in considering the concept of property today there ought to be some discussion of the innumerable legal and extra-legal restrictions which in recent times have greatly altered the exercise of property rights. It might be argued that the holders of property rights have been forced more and more to consider the community in the exercise of these rights and hence the degree to which we must emphasize the socialization of wealth today has become more a

question of economics and less a question of morals and liberty.

PAUL ABRECHT

RUSSIA'S EUROPE. By Hal Ehrman. Appleton-Century. \$3.75.

Ehrman is a correspondent who was sent to Europe by PM and some of the liberal weeklies. He had a sympathetic attitude toward Russia but found that the facts did not square with his presuppositions or those of his journals. He does not, however, serve up merely bitter disillusionments, as is the wont of those whose earlier hopes in Russia as a holyland of communism have been disappointed. He finds some very creative and hopeful aspects in the life behind the iron curtain. But he is convinced that the drift is toward a more and more brutal totalitarianism.

Ehrman devotes particular attention to Yugoslavia where he spent the greatest amount of time. He reports that Tito's government has been remarkably successful in reconstructing devastated industries. But he also traces the destruction of the last vestiges of democracy in that country step by step. One interesting aspect of his account is that it shows communist oligarchies almost as avid for privilege as for power. Tito, he reports, wears as many medals and uniforms as did Goering, and the other communist big-wigs are not far behind in their luxurious life, including their occupancy of former royal palaces. One is reminded of George Orwell's satire on communism, *Animal Farm*, in which the animals adopt the slogan, "All animals are equal but some are more equal than others." R. N.

OR FORFEIT FREEDOM. By Robert Wood Johnson. New York: Doubleday. 1947. 271 pp. \$2.50.

It has been obvious for some time that in the younger generation of American business leaders there are many who reject the tradition of the National Association of Manufacturers. They have founded the powerful Committee for Economic Development, which is programmatically concerned with the modernization of business outlook

and particularly the recognition of business responsibility for the avoidance of major crises, either through deliberate planned action of the business community itself or, should that fail, through cooperation with the government. The present book, by the head of a well-known manufacturing corporation, happily completes the picture in regard to internal management, public relations, and particularly labor relations.

Mr. Johnson believes in the necessity of capitalist business as the foundation of individual liberty. His general views are open to question, he glosses over serious problems in economics as in education. But this is not interesting. What is distinctly interesting is that here is a Republican businessman whose juicy criticism is primarily directed against business. He has a sense of urgency: in the next five years it may be decided whether American business can reform itself sufficiently to become capable and worthy of survival, or whether its obstinacy will doom it, and with it the American conception of liberty.

He feels that the hostility to business on the part of labor and of wide groups of public opinion is well deserved; one cannot blame them for founding their judgment of business on their experiences with businessmen and efficiency engineers. His main concern is the personal dignity of the worker, which is more than the decent wage integral, and on which the dignity of the employer depends. He is intelligent and understanding enough to realize that callousness and haughtiness hurt proud men and women and are reacted to in the end by the most irrational forms of resistance even to the best-intentioned reforms, when these come along at last. In other words, he realizes that the accumulation of economic and psychological wrongs has been such that its effects cannot be undone at will. He is resourceful and patient in his approach to many experimental methods to make the worker a partner, if not in the enterprise, at least in the job of production. There seems to be a tendency to make the corporation too much the center of life, also in social and educational regard—quite intelligibly in

smaller company towns. But this is outweighed by the emphasis on the desirability and necessity of unions; the author regards even the union shop as quite acceptable if there are safeguards for the freedom of older non-organized employees, and with the further proviso that the union leaders should be as remarkable a mixture of intelligence, shrewdness, and warm-heartedness as we may guess that he himself is.

EDUARD HEIMANN

PREFACE TO ETHICAL LIVING. *By Robert E. Fitch.* New York: Association Press (Haddam House). 1947. 80 pp. \$1.25.

There is nothing "detached" about this little book. And that is one of the reasons why it should be especially relevant for young people today. Not pretending to present a systematic theological treatise, the author attempts to "keep to the line of a plain law and of a simple faith." He speaks out of his experience as a college teacher and as a Navy Chaplain, touching upon a wide variety of current subjects. College people, particularly, will find that Fitch engages in a readable manner many of the pertinent issues which they face.

The thesis is that "the ills of our country today are not so much the sins of spiritual pride as they are the ills of moral indecision and of religious confusion." Our immediate problem is to find a basis for "ethical living," to get a clear grasp of the right standards of character and conduct. But the courage to be what we ought to be must be found in religion.

In the recent war, the author notes, we were a dramatic example of a nation fighting without faith; we were unlike both enemies and allies in this fact. We have lost faith even in the secular shibboleths of a few years ago: sex, prosperity, and "Humanity." We no longer recognize any absolute moral law. Ethical relativism in America is traced to our social, political, and economic experience. We become a nation by rejecting absolute monarchy; we rejected the absolute of the church, or theocracy.

Prosperity was an absolute which toppled. Part of the relativism and confusion comes from the "melting-pot" experience. We developed, too, a type of individualism which ignores moral laws involving the broader social obligations. Finally, the habit of free enterprise has left its mark upon our morality. If, however, we are to measure up to the responsibility which comes of our being "a new Adam in whose hand lies the destiny for good or for evil of untold generations of men and women," a new birth of faith is necessary.

This rebirth of faith involves some knowledge of our character as human beings as distinguished from vegetables, animals, and machines. To be distinctively human is to "be true to the intelligence and the character, the mind and the soul, that are in us." Man is primarily spirit. This rebirth of faith also involves some knowledge about the kind of world in which we live. The existence of moral law is established by appeal to reason (or science) and by the testimony of the Hebrew-Christian tradition. The last chapter, entitled "The Courage of Faithfulness," states the necessity of religious faith as the context for standards of character and conduct. Christianity gives us the courage of faithfulness to our principles.

Fitch is interested in the same problem which engaged such recent writers as Trueblood (*The Predicament of Modern Man*), Shinn (*Beyond this Darkness*), and others. He indicates some of the minimal bases for "ethical living." His book will need to be read, however, along with the more solid theological works. The nominal and prospective Christians whom he addresses will want a more thorough understanding of the essential message of Christianity for our world. And questions may well be raised about the basic thesis that moral indecision and religious confusion are better clues to our problem than "spiritual pride."

D. B. ROBERTSON

THE MISINTERPRETATION OF MAN.

By Paul Roubizek. New York: Scribner. \$2.75.

This "study in European thought of the

19th century" includes quite valuable analyses of the thought of Kant, Goethe, Napoleon, Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx, Tolstoi, and Dostoevsky. In the author's opinion Dostoevsky's Christian interpretation of man is essentially correct while all the other interpretations contain either profound or flagrant errors. There is unfortunately no sustained thesis in the book so that it is little more than a series of vignettes of the important leaders of thought in the previous century.

R. N.

YOUTH AFTER CONFLICT. By Goodwin Watson. Introduction by William H. Kilpatrick. New York: Association Press. 1947. 300 pp. \$4.00.

The greater part of this study by Professor Watson reads like an educator's effort to recreate the scenes of *only yesterday*. His point of departure is that of inquiring into youth's reactions to broad social movements. Indeed it is the thesis of this book, as it is emphatically endorsed by Professor Kilpatrick in the introduction, "that it is not the war which principally influences youth coming to maturity shortly after its close, but rather the general social situation otherwise surrounding youth" (vii).

In seven chapters the author surveys the conditions of youth after the Civil War, European and American youth after World War I, the after effects of war, the flowering of modernism, and an unusual set of predictions about youth's world in the 1950's. When the Civil War was over, youth was absorbed in the demand for Westward expansion, while World War I witnessed the emergence of youth acutely conscious of their differences with generations past and sincere in their rejection of traditional morality. Even the Church's youth were disturbed where they had shared the simple faith of secularism. "It is probable that the war helped to undermine the prevailing 19th Century faith in progress and so laid the foundation for some of the Neo-orthodox and crisis theology" (29). It is also possible that man simply *learned* better. An Army sergeant used to say calmly, "You know, Chaplain, human nature is so prevalent!"

Professor Watson has gathered in this volume an abundance of quotes from college presidents and editors, ministers, and professors. He has covered the field of education, religion, drama, art, and many others. The total effort is to the point that the major characteristics of a post-war era manifest themselves before and in that war. Thus the ground is laid for predictions. This reviewer feels that such an amassing of other people's impressions will hardly stand as *science* beside the careful anthropological and psychological work of a Kardiner.

The predictions based on the answers of 100 selected "sages" look for an upward swing in science, education, technology—and the divorce rate—among many things. The author does not expect revolution in the 1950's and his prediction that U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. tension will be a major international concern is a present reality. But the family of the 1950's will have achieved something approaching Utopia. "Husbands and wives will be together only because (and so long as) they are genuinely happy in their relationship to one another. They will have children only when and because they want them. Parents, no longer bent on maintaining their authoritative domination over children, will find the association with youth an almost constant joy" (267).

With such a pious hope in mind it is no wonder that the author in discussing the revival of fundamentalism, neo-orthodoxy, and religious reaction (the author includes them under the same heading), looks sadly at Union Seminary "once the advance guard of liberal strength, [where] the most potent thinker is Reinhold Niebuhr, a prophet teaching the futility of sinful man's efforts to bring the Kingdom of God on earth" (276). This may be shocking news for those members of The Fellowship of Socialist Christians who have had some part in "Reiny's" efforts toward social justice for these 20 years. In this, at least, they can say that the Kingdom of God "is beginning to come," while *Youth After Conflict* looks for it around the corner of the next decade.

C. R. STINETTE, JR.

LABOR'S RELATION TO THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY. (Publication of the Institute for Religious and Social Studies). Ed. by Liston Pope. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. \$2.50.

In this series of addresses a group of outstanding American labor leaders evaluate the contributions of organized labor to the community welfare and make a plea for a better understanding by religious groups of the social and spiritual forces at work in the labor movement. It includes articles by Mark Starr, Kermit Eby, John Ramsay, Lawrence Rogin, Dwight Bradley, A. Philip Randolph, and others, on such topics as labor and education, labor and politics, and the problems of minority groups.

It is well to be reminded, especially today, that more than any other group in our society, the labor movement has been working for the extension of social and economic democracy. As Lawrence Rogin points out, the program and efforts of the labor unions are the chief hope today for achieving a just and stable economic system.

There are some deserved criticisms of the church's attitude toward labor and its failure to appreciate the need to cooperate with labor in the realization of a better social order. Some of the writers point out that while the church gave them their original inspiration to serve mankind and work for social justice, they had to leave the church and enter the labor movement in order to find a satisfactory outlet for their social concern. Unfortunately most of the suggestions for improving relations between the church and labor are based on a sectarian theology which tends to the view that the aims of labor are identical with the aims of religion.

The one article by a churchman, "Religion's Contribution to Labor Leadership" by Bernard Clausen, is not only disappointing, it is trite. If this is the contribution which religion has to make, one is inclined to sympathize with the labor leader who left the church without any regrets. One can excuse the theological inadequacies of some of the lay writers in view of this kind of professional ineptitude.

PAUL ABRECHT

A PROPOSAL

The Executive Committee of the F.S.C. will present a group of proposals to the organization at its meeting on February 2 (announced on the inside front cover). These proposals were formulated by the Committee at a meeting on November 17, after a vote at the Fall Conference of the Fellowship called on the committee to present concrete suggestions on these subjects.

It will come as no surprise to older members of the Fellowship that the question of the name of the organization is again being discussed. Many members have long felt that the name ought to express more realistically the convictions of the Fellowship as they relate to the American scene. The Fall Conference went on record in favor of a change and authorized the Executive Committee to bring a proposal for a new name before the membership.

At the same time the Conference discussed another perennial question: the desirability of expanding the influence and membership of the Fellowship. There were two fundamental questions: the first was the feasibility of raising the budget required to finance such a project, and the second was the question of whether such an extension would necessitate any change in the principles or program of the Fellowship. It was the consensus that it would not be necessary to change the principles, or to change the program fundamentally. It was also agreed that the problem of raising the necessary funds was not insuperable and that it would be worthwhile to begin with a modest program for a trial period.

Change of the Name

After considering various alternatives the Executive Committee decided to submit the following new name for consideration: *Christian Frontier* (with the subtitle) *A Fellowship for Political and Economic Democracy*. The committee recognized that similar names have been used for organizations or publications in the U. S. and abroad, but that there would be little danger of confusion with this Fellowship.

Proposals for Expansion

The Executive Committee further decided that it is both feasible and desirable for the Fellowship to expand its membership. To this end it was decided to submit for the approval of the membership a proposal to raise one thousand dollars which would be spent to promote the extension of the Fellowship. It was decided that it would require the part-time services of one person to make the minimal effort to promote the Fellowship in schools, colleges, and seminaries, and to promote the formation of local and regional groups which would meet for conferences as do the members in the New York area.

Since many members may not be able to attend the February meeting in New York, the Executive Committee would appreciate receiving opinions from as many members as possible. Letters should be addressed to the office of *Christianity and Society*. Prompt replies will enable the Fellowship to have a fair cross section of the opinion of its members by the time of the February meeting.

